GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH

ABSTRACT

Inquiry Commission – Inquiry into the collapse of the Wall at Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Vari Devasthanam, Simhachalam during the Chandanotsavam occurred at approximately 3.30 A.M on 30.04.2025 leading to the death of Seven People – Ordered – Inquiry Commission - Appointed – Notification - Issued.

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GENERAL ADMINISTRATION (SC.I) DEPARTMENT

G.O.MS.No:49 Dated.30.04.2025.

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ORDER:

The following Notification shall be published in an extraordinary issue of the Andhra Pradesh Gazette, Dated: 30.04.2025.

NOTIFICATION-I

Whereas, the Government of Andhra Pradesh is of the opinion that it is necessary to appoint an Inquiry Commission for the purpose of making an Inquiry into a matter of public importance hereinafter specified.

2. The Collector & District Magistrate, Visakhapatnam has reported to the Government, that during the Chandanotsavam Ritual at Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Vari Devasthanam, Simhachalam, a wall collapsed on 30-04-2025 at approximately 3:30 AM, on the hilltop area near the bus stop, approximately 200 meters from the entry point of the Rs. 300/- darshan line. The debris removal operations were carried out upto 5.30 AM, with the assistance of the SDRF and Fire Department. In this tragic incident, Seven (07) devotees (4 men and 3 women) had died due to injuries and One (01) person was injured.

3. In the light of seriousness of the incident and the need for a thorough time bound inquiry to establish the causes and accountability, and to recommend preventive measures for the future, the Government now, in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 3 of the Commission of Inquiries Act, 1952 (Central Act No.60 of 1952), the Government of Andhra Pradesh hereby appoints the Inquiry Commission to Inquire into

(Contd.on P 2)

the Collapse of the Wall that occurred at Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Vari Devasthanam, Simhachalam during the Chandanotsavam on 30.04.2025 approximately at 3.30 AM, as follows:

1. Sri S. Suresh Kumar, IAS, Prl. Secretary To Government, Municipal Administration And Urban Development Department – Chairman

2. Sri Ake Ravi Krishna, IPS – Inspector General of Police - Member

3. Sri Venkateswar Rao, Advisor and Engineer–In-Chief, Irrigation (FAC) – Member

4. The scope of the above Inquiry Commission shall be to:

a. Ascertain the sequence of events that led to the collapse of the Wall near the temple premises on 30th April 2025.

b. Investigate whether sufficient safety and precautionary measures were taken considering the topography and the likelihood of heavy rain in the area.

c. Assess the emergency preparedness of the temple management and local authorities, and the timeliness and adequacy of rescue and relief operations.

d. Recommend:

- Disciplinary or legal action against those responsible.
- Immediate safety audit of structures in and around the Temple and similar pilgrim centers across the State.
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for:

I. Construction and maintenance of civil structures, and disaster risk management in religious institutions, especially those located on hill slopes or in ecologically sensitive areas.

II. Erection and maintenance of temporary structures during festivals and other such occasions in the religious institutions.

(Contd.on P.3)

5. The Commission shall submit its preliminary report within 72 hours from the time of issue of this order, and also submit a detailed report with findings and recommendations to the Government within 30 days from the date of issue of this order.

6. According to Section (4) of the Commissions of Inquiries Act, 1952 powers of the Commission shall be that the Commission shall have the powers of a civil court, while trying a suit under the Code of Civil Procedure,1908 (5 of 1908), in respect of the following matter, namely:-

a) Summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person from any part of India and examining him on oath;
b) Requiring the discovery and production of any document;
c) Receiving evidence on affidavits;
d) Requisitioning any public record or copy thereof from any Court or Office;
e) Issuing Commissions for the examination of Witnesses or Documents;
f) Any other matter which may be prescribed by the Commissioner of the Inquiry.

NOTIFICATION-II

Whereas, the Government of Andhra Pradesh is of the opinion, having regard to the nature of the Inquiry to be made by the Commission and other circumstances of the case that all the provisions of the Sub-Sections (2)(3)(4) and (5) of Section 5 of the Commission of Inquiries Act,1952, should be made applicable to the Commission appointed in the Notification-I above.

2. Now, therefore, in the exercise of the powers conferred by the sub-section (1) of Section 5 of the said Act, the Government of Andhra Pradesh hereby directs that all the provisions of the sub-section (2),(3), (4) and (5) of Section 5 of the Commissions of Inquiries Act,1952 shall apply to the Commission.

( BY ORDER AND IN THE NAME OF THE GOVERNOR OF ANDHRA PRADESH)

K.VIJAYANAND
CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT

To
The Commissioner of Printing, Stationery & Stores Purchase, Mutyalampadu, Vijayawada (for Publication of Notification in an extraordinary issue of A.P.Gazette, dated:30.04.2025 and to supply 100 copies of the same).

(Contd.on P4)

Sri S. Suresh Kumar, IAS, Prl. Secretary to Government, MA&UD Dept.
(Chairman of the Inquiry Commission).
Sri Ake Ravi Krishna, IPS, Inspector General of Police, Anti Narcotic Group Law Enforcement - ( Member of the Inquiry Commission).
Sri Venkateswar Rao, Advisor and EnC (FAC)-
(Member of the Inquiry Commission).

Copy to:
The Collector & District Magistrate, Visakhapatnam.
The Executive Officer, Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Vari Devasthanam, Simhachalam.
The Home Department.
The Revenue (Endowment) Department.
The Law Department.
The Water Resources Department.
The Commissioner, Information and Public Relations, A.P., Vijayawada.
The P.S to Special Chief Secretary/ Secretary/ Additional Secretary to Chief Minister.
The P.S to C.S/P.S to Prl. Secretary to Govt.(Poll).
SF/SCs.

//FORWARDED::BY ORDER//

SECTION OFFICER (SC)